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(74) Agent: FRENCH, Timothy, A.; Fish & Richardson, One Financial Center, Suite 2500, Boston, MA 02111-2658 (81) Designated States: AT (European patent), AU, BE (European patent), CA, CH (European patent), DE (European patent) pean patent)*, DK (European patent), ES (European patent), FI, FR (European patent), GB (European patent), IT (European patent), JP, LU (European patent), NL (European patent), NO, SE (European patent).

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(54) Title: IL-2 DELETION MUTANTS

Ala Pro Thr Ser Ser Ser Thr Lys Lys Thr Gln Leu Gln gca cct act tca agt tct aca aag aaa aca cag cta caa IL-2 amino acid: cDNA sequence: codon modifications: GCA CCT ACT TCT AGC TCT ACC AAG AAA ACC CAG CTG CAG synthetic DNA sequence:

Leu Glu His Leu Leu Leu Asp Leu Gln Met Ile Leu Asn Gly Ile Asn Asn Tyr Lys Asn ctg gag cat tta ctg ctg gat tta cag alg att ttg aat gga att aat aat tac aag aat CTC GAG CAC CTG CTG CTG GAT TTG CAG ATG ATC CTG AAC GGT ATC AAC AAT TAC AAG AAC XhoI

Pro Lys Leu Thr Arg Met Leu Thr Phe Lys Phe Tyr Met Pro Lys Lys Ala Thr Glu Leu ccc asa ctc acc agg atg ctc aca ttt aag ttt tac atg ccc aag aag gcc aca gaa ctg CCG AAA CTG ACG CGT ATG CTG ACC TTC AAG TTC TAC ATG CCG AAG AAG GCC ACC GAA CTG MluI

60 Lys His Leu Gln Cys Leu Glu Glu Glu Leu Lys Pro Leu Glu Glu Val Leu Asr Leu Ala aaa cat ctt cag tgt cta gaa gaa ctc aaa cct ctg gag gaa gtg cta aat ita gct GAA GAA GAA CTG AAA CCG CTG GAG GAA GTT CTG AAC CTG GCT AAA CAC CTG GAG TGT CTA

(57) Abstract

A mutant IL-2 molecule capable of binding an IL-2 receptor-bearing cell, having a deletion of one to five amino acid residues of IL-2, the deletion resulting in active IL-2 molecules that have increased resistance to proteolysis.

^{*} See back of page

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IL-2 DELETION MUTANTS

- 1 -

Background of the Invention

This invention relates to the use of recombinant DNA techniques to make mutant interleukin-2 (IL-2, molecules and chimeric IL-2/toxin molecules.

I1-2 is a protein secreted by human T-lymphocytes which is capable of binding to IL-2. receptors on activated T-lymphocytes and effecting T-lymphocyte proliferation. IL-2 has been shown to be a therapeutic immunostimulant in humans (Rosenberg, 1988, Immunology Today 9:2: 58-62), and IL-2 or a specific binding portion thereof can be coupled to the enzymatically active portion of diphtheria toxin to form a hybrid molecule with a number of therapeutic applications (Murphy U.S. Patent No. 4,675,382, hereby incorporated by reference). IL-2/diphtheria toxin hybrid proteins of Murphy '382, which were made using recombinant DNA techniques, have been shown to inhibit rejection of transplanted organs (Pankewycz et al., Transplantation 47:318-322 (1989)), and are also potential therapeutic agents in the treatment of certain

20 cancers and autoimmune diseases in which the IL-2 receptor plays a role.

IL-2 encoding DNA sequences are reported in a 25 number of publications, and in addition, a modified IL-2-encoding gene, in which a cysteine codon is changed to enhance stability, is described in U.S. Pat. No. 4,518,584, hereby incorporated by reference. U.S.S.N. 834,900, filed Feb. 28, 1986, hereby incorporated by 30 reference, describes a synthetic IL-2-encoding DNA

sequence that differs from the natural IL-2 encoding DNA in that it contains more prokaryotic preferred translation codons than the naturally occurring sequence.

Amino acid deletions or substitutions have been made in the IL-2 amino acid sequence (European Pat. Appln. Nos. 86114468.1 and 87101839.6, U.S. Pat. No. 4,604,377). Although the DNA and amino acid sequences of IL-2 and its crystal structure are known (Brandhuber et al., 1987, Science 238, 1707), there is little data available that allows accurate prediction of the regions of IL-2 that are responsible for biological activity or are sensitive to proteolytic breakdown; e.g., a single substitution of the cysteine residue at position 125 of the IL-2 amino acid sequence with a serine results in increased stability of the molecule (U.S. Patent No. 4,604,377); a substitution of the tryptophan residue at position 121 inactivates the molecule; deletion of amino acid residues 100-104 decreases the biological activity by two oders of magnitude; and deletion of amino acid residues 124-126 renders the molecule inactive (Collins et al., 1988, Proc. Nat. Aca. Sci. 85: 7709; Cohen et al., 1986, Science 234:349).

Summary of the Invention

The present invention provides IL-2 mutant polypeptides that bear a deletion of one to five amino acids, yet retain the ability to bind to IL-2 receptor-bearing cells. It is known that lysine 76 is a proteolytic site in the IL-2 molecule (Cohen et al., 1986, Science 234:349). These mutants either delete this proteolytic site completely, or alter the structure of that area in an effort to reduce proteolysis. The IL-2 mutants can be used as immunostimulants or, when coupled to a toxin to form a hybrid IL2-toxin molecule,

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can be used to treat immune and other disorders characterized by the presence of the IL-2 receptor.

The invention thus generally features eight new mutant IL-2 polypeptides capable of binding to the IL-2 receptor; the IL-2 polypeptides have deletions of one or more amino acid residues, as follows: 74; 74-78; 75-77; 76-78; 76-79; 75, 78; and 79 (according to the numbering convention of the Figure, taken from Williams et al., Nucleic Acids Res., vol. 16, no. 22 (1988).

In some preferred embodiments, the mutant IL-2 polypeptide may be part of a fusion protein consisting of a toxin portion (e.g., derived from diphtheria toxin) covalently linked, preferably through a peptide bond at its carboxy terminal end, to the mutant IL-2 polypeptide. The diphtheria toxin portion is large enough to exhibit cytotoxic activity and small enough to fail to exhibit generalized eukaryotic cell binding.

Preferably, the DNA sequence encoding the IL-2 polypeptide contains nucleotide substitutions designed to maximize gene expression in the cells used for expression; i.e., where prokaryotic cells such as <u>E. coli</u> are used, preferred prokaryotic codons are substituted for some of the natural codons (this has been done in the sequence shown in the Figure).

The hybrid molecules of the invention are useful for treating diseases in which the IL-2 receptor plays a role, e.g., IL-2 receptor positive malignancies, allergic reactions, and systemic lupus erythmatosis (SLE), or to prevent an immune response by IL-2 receptor bearing T cells that occurs in graft rejection. This targeted toxin functions by the following mechanism: the IL-2/toxin, by virtue of the IL-2 domain, binds to high affinity IL-2 receptor-bearing cells. The IL-2-toxin is internalized into endocytic vesicles by IL-2 receptor-mediated endocytosis. Acidification of the

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endosome causes a conformational change in the toxin, allowing its membrane-associating domains to interact with the endocytic vesicle's membrane and facilitate translocation of the enzymatically active fragment A into the cytosol. Once delivered to the cytosol, fragment A catalyzes the ADP-ribosylation of elongation factor 2, resulting in inhibition of protein synthesis and subsequent death of the IL-2-receptor bearing cell.

Other features and advantages of the invention will be apparent from the following description of the preferred embodiments thereof, and from the claims.

<u>Description</u> of the <u>Preferred Embodiments</u> The drawing is first described.

Drawing

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The Figure is a DNA sequence, encoding IL-2, in which preferred prokaryotic translation codons are employed; the numbers correspond to the numbering referred to in this specification.

Construction of the Genes Encoding IL-2 Deletion Mutants/Toxin

Amino acids 74 through 79 are contained within the Xbal/Notl fragment of the synthetic IL-2 gene (see Figure). For each of the eight deletion mutants, an Xbal/Notl fragment with a deletion of DNA encoding between one and five amino acids is synthesized using an automated DNA synthesizer according to conventional techniques. The DNA sequences of the oligonucleotides are shown in Table I.

Each Xbal/Notl fragment is synthesized as two complementary strands with a 1/2 Xbal site at the 5' end and a 1/2 Notl site at the 3' end. The synthetic DNA's are gel purified on a denaturing polyacrylamide-urea gel and complementary strands are annealed according to conventional methods. The annealed DNA's are ligated

into the expression plasmid, pDW15 (Williams et al., 1987, Prot. Engineering $\underline{1}$:493), which contains the synthetic IL-2 gene shown in the Figure. Ligation reactions are transformed into a suitable \underline{E} . coli host according to conventional techniques.

Transformants are screened by restriction digest analysis of minilysate DNA using the restriction enzyme <u>Ddel</u>. The <u>Ddel</u> restriction digest profile of the IL-2 mutants differs from that of non-deleted IL-2 due to elimination of a <u>Ddel</u> site within the <u>Xbal/Notl</u> fragment of the deletion mutants. The DNA sequence of the IL-2 deletion mutants are confirmed by the dideoxy method of Sanger et al. (1977, Proc. Nat. Acad. Sci., 74:5463).

The genes encoding the IL-2/diphtheria toxin fusion proteins are constructed by standard recombinant DNA techniques, as follows. The IL-2 portion of the fusion gene is contained-within the Sphl/Hindlll fragment of the IL-2 deletion mutant derived from This DNA fragment is ligated to Sphl/Hindlll digested plasmid pABM6508 (Bishai et al., 1987, J. Bacteriol, 169:5140), which contains the diphtheria toxin-related portion of the fusion up to and including the amino acid residue Ala 486. The DNA is transformed into a suitable \underline{E} . \underline{coli} host and plated onto Luria broth plates plus an appropriate antibiotic for selection, according to conventional techniques. Transformants are screened by Ddel restriction digest analysis of minilysate DNA and by Western blot analy is, as follows. Western Blot Analysis

Total bacterial cell lysates are analyzed by SDS-polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis (Laemmli, 1970, Nature 227:680) for the production of IL-2/toxin protein. Proteins are electroblotted onto nylon

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membrane and immunoblot analysis is performed according to conventional techniques. Confirmation of the expected construct is made by positive cross-reactivity to both anti-diphtheria toxin (Connaught Laboratories, Toronto, Ontario, Canada) and to a monoclonal anti-IL-2 antibody, as well as by comparison of the size of the expressed protein to known IL-2/toxin standard. Final confirmation of the construct is made by DNA sequence analysis of the IL-2//toxin gene.

10 Cytotoxicity assay

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Referring to Table II, C91/Pl cells (a high-affinity IL2 receptor-bearing cell line) were seeded in 96-well V-bottom plates (Nunc, Roskilde, Denmark) at a concentration of 10⁵ per well in 100 μl complete medium. I1-2-toxin was added at varying concentrations $(10^{-12}M \text{ to } 10^{-6}M)$ in complete medium. Cells cultured with medium alone were included as the control. Following 18 hours incubation at 37°C in a 5% Co, atmosphere, the plates were centrifuged for 5 minutes at 170 x g, the medium was removed and replaced with 100 µl leucine-free medium (DMEM Selectamine, Gibco) containing 2.5 µCi/ml [14C]-leucine (New England Nuclear, Boston, MA). Cells were then incubated at 37° for 90 minutes and collected on glass fiber filters using a cell harvester (Skatron, Sterling, VA). Filters were washed, dried, and counted according to standard methods. determinations were performed in pentuplicate. refers to the concentration of IL2 required to inhibit protein synthesis to 50% of the untreated control.

TABLE

Leu Siu Siu Ciu Leu Lys Pro Leu Sia Siu Fal Leu Asa Leu Ala Sia Ser Lys den Phe Res Leu deg Pro 19 09 85 t coding sequence (2, 4 3,)

T CTA GNA GNA, CTG NAA CCG CTG GNB GNA GTT CTG NAC CTB GCA. TCT NAA NAC TTC CAC CTG C8G CCG C8 len Sia Sia Sia len lys dro len Sia Sia Fal leu Asa len Ala Sor lys den dde Ris leu dry dro psI 133(A74)

T CTA GAL GAL GAL CTG AAL CCG CTG GAG GAL GTT CTG AAC CTG GCA CAG AAA AAC TTC CAC CTG CGG CCB CG len bin din die Leu lys dro len Mu bin dal len den den die din lys den dde Ris len dry dro psI 134(A75)

T CTA GAL GAL GAL CTE ANA COP CTO BAD GAL OTT CTO DAC CTO GCA CAD TOT ANA ANC CAC CTO COP COP CO len blu blu blu len lys fro len blu blu fal len den leu dla bla bla ser lys den füs len dry fro psI 136(A78)

T CTA GAL GAA GAL CTG AMA CCG CTG GAB GAL GTT CTG ANC CTG GCA CAG TCT AMA AAC TTC CTG CGG CG CG lor An Gin An Len lys fra lou Gin Gin fal Leu Am Leu Als Gin Ser Lys Asn Phe Leu Arg fro psI 137(A79)

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T CTA GAA GAA GAA CTG AMA CCG CTG GAG GAA BTT CTG AAC CTG GCA CAG TTC CTG CGG CGG CG Len Sin Sin Sin Lea Lys Pro Lea Gia Au Val Lea den Lea Ala Sin Phe Lea dry Pro psI 143(A75-77)

psi 141(a74-78) i cia cha cha cha che ana cos cis che che cha cit cis anc cis cca cac cis cos cos cos Len Alu blu blu Leu Lys Pro Leu Glu Glu Pal Leu Asa Leu Ala Kis Leu Arg Pro

888 T CTA GLA GLA GLA CTG ALL CGG CTG GLA GTT CTG ALC CTG GCA CLG TCT CLC CTG CGG Lea Gla Gla Leu Lys Pro Lea Gla Gla Fal Lea Asa Lea Ala Gla Ser His Lea Arg psi 150(A76-79)

I CTA GAA GAA GAA GTO AAA CCO CTO BAB GAA GTT CTO AAC CTO GCA CLO TCT CTO CCO CCO CC Lou blu blu blu Lou Lys Fro Lou blu blu Fal Lou Asn Lou Ala blu Ser Lou Arg Fro psI 145(A76-78)

Table II

Plasmid	. amino acid(s)	
	deleted	C91/PL IC50
•		_1
psI133	Φ74	6×10 ⁻¹ M
psI134	Φ75	$1 \times 10^{-10} M$
PsI136	Ф78 -	5x10 ⁻¹¹ M
psI137	. Φ79	$2 \times 10^{-10} M$
psI143	Φ75-77	$2 \times 10^{-10} M$
psI141	Ф74-78	1x10 ⁻¹⁰ M
psI145	Ф76-78	$2x10^{-10}M$
psI150	Ф76-79	$7x10^{11}M$
(psI129	no deletion	typically
control		$5x10^{-11}M)$

Other Embodiments

Other embodiments are within the following claims. For example, the deletion mutant IL-2 molecules can be used alone, in addition to their use in toxic hybrids, the deletions can advantagously provide resistance to proteolysis in both contexts. In addition, toxins other than diphtheria toxin can be coupled to the mutants, e.g., the enzymatically active portion of Pseudomonas exotoxin can be used.

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Claims

- 1 A mutant IL-2 molecule in which only amino 2 acid residue 74 has been deleted.
- 2. A mutant IL-2 molecule in which only amino
 acid residues 74-78 have been deleted.
- 3. A mutant IL-2 molecule in which only amino acid residues 76-78 have been deleted.
- 1 4. A mutant IL-2 molecule in which only amino 2 acid residues 76-79 have been deleted.
- 5. A mutant IL-2 molecule in which only amino acid residue 75 has been deleted.
- 6. A mutant IL-2 molecule in which only amino
 acid residue 78 has been deleted.
- 7. A mutant IL-2 molecule in which only amino acid residues 75-77 have been deleted.
- 8. A mutant IL-2 molecule in which only amino
 acid residue 79 has been deleted.
- 9. A DNA sequence encoding the mutant IL-2 molecule of any of claims 1-8.
- 1 10. The DNA sequence of claim 9, contained in 2 an expression vector.
- 1 11. A cell containing the expression vector of claim 10.

- 1 12. The DNA sequence of claim 9 wherein said
 2 DNA sequence is a synthetic sequence containing more
 3 prokaryotic preferred translation codons than naturally
 4 occurring IL-2 encoding DNA.
- 1 13. A method of producing mutant IL-2 comprising culturing the cell of claim 12 and recovering mutant IL-2 therefrom.
- 1 14. The mutant IL-2 molecule of any of claims 1-8, covalently linked to a portion of a toxin molecule which is large enough to exhibit cytotoxic activity and small enough to fail to exhibit generalized eukaryotic cell binding.
- 1 15. The molecule of claim 14 wherein said 2 toxin molecule is diptheria toxin, and said portion of 3 diptheria toxin is linked to said mutant IL-2 molecule 4 by a peptide bond.

IL-2 amino acid: Ala Pro Thr Ser Ser Ser Thr Lys Lys Thr Gln Leu Gln cDNA sequence: gca cct act tca agt tct aca aag aaa aca cag cta caa todon modifications: codon modifications: codon providence: GCA CCT ACT TCT AGC TCT ACC AAG AAA ACC CAG CTG CAG	is Leu Leu Leu Asp Leu Gln Met Ile Leu Asn Gly Ile Asn Asn Tyr Lys Asn at tta ctg ctg gat tta cag alg att ttg aat gga att aat aat tac aag aat c c g c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c	eu Thr Arg Met Leu Thr Phe Lys Phe Tyr Met Pro Lys Lys Ala Thr Glu Leu tc acc agg atg ctc aca ttt aag ttt tac atg ccc aag aag gcc aca gaa ctg g c t g c c TG ACG CGT ATG CTG ACC TTC AAG TTC TAC ATG CCG AAG AAG GCC ACC GAA CTG	Leu Gln Cys Leu Glu Glu Glu Leu Lys Pro Leu Glu Glu Val Leu Asn Leu Ala ctt cag tgt cta gaa gaa ctc aaa cct ctg gag gaa gtg cta aat tta gct g g g g g g g g g g g g g g g g g g
IL-2 cDN codon modi synthetic DN		Pro Lys Leu Ccc aaa ctc ag CCG AAA CTG A	Lys His Leu G aaa cat ctt c c g AAA CAC CTG G

SUBSTITUTE SHEET

							Thr STOP	tga	TGA
	Val	gtt	GTT	Thr	acc	ACC	Thr	act	c ACC
	I1e	ata	ATC	Ala	gca	GCA	Leu	cta	g CTG
	Val	gta	GTA ATC	Thr Ala	aca gca	ACC	Thr	aca	ACC
90	Asn	aac	AAC	110 Glu	gag	GAG ACC GCA ACC	130 Ser	tca	t c g c r rc rcr rca
	lle	atc	ATC	Asp	gat	GAT	116	atc	ATC
	Asn	aat	c g ct g c t c g tct c CTG CTG ATC TCT AAC ATC GTA ATC GTT NoII	110 Thr Thr Phe Met Cys Glu Tyr Ala Asp Glu 7	gct	GAA ACC ACC TIC ATG TGT GAA TAC GCT	Ile	atc	c t c t c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c
	Ser	agc	tct TCT	Tyr	tat	TAC	Ser	agc	tct TCT
	Ile	atc	ATC	Glu	gaa	GAA	Gln	caa	g CAG
	Leu	tta	် CTG	Cys	tgt	TGT	Cys	tğt	TGT
	Asp	gac	GAC	Met	atg	ATG	Phe	ttt	c TTC
	Arg	agg	CGT	Phe	ttc	TTC	Thr	acc	ACC
	Pro	၁၁၁	ອວວ	Thr	aca	ACC	Ile	att	c ATC
	Arg	aga	CGG C	Thr	aca	ACC	Trp	tgg	166
\$ \$	Leu	tta	c g CTG	0 5	gaa	GAA	120 Arg	aga	c t CGT
	HIs	cac	c TTC CAC	Ser	tct	TCT	Ile Val Glu Phe Leu Asn	aac	AAC
	Phe	ttt	c TTC	G1y	gga	GGC Ban	Leu	ctg ¿	CTG
	Asn	aac	AAA AAC	Lys	aag	AAG	Phe	ttt	TTC
	Gln Ser Lys Asn Phe	aaa		Leu Glu Leu Lys Gly Ser	cta	CTG GAA CTG AAG GGC TCT	G1u	gaa	ATC GTA GAA TTC CTG AAC
	Ser	agc	ICL	Glu	gaa	GAA	Val	att gta	GTA
	Glu	caa	g CAG	Leu	ctg	CIG	lle	att	ATC

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Science, vol. 238, issued 1987, Brandhuber et al, "The Structure of Interleukin-2, 09, see entire document. The Journal of Biological vol. 262, No. 12, issued 25 Ju et al, "Structure-Function of Human Interleukin-2", page see entire document. *Special categories of cited documents: 15 "T" and document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance "E" earlier document but published on or after the international filling date "L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified) "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means "P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed "4" IV. CERTIFICATION Date of the Actual Completion of the International Search 10 Date	e-Activity 1-8						
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ISA / US Gart	or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art. document member of the same patent family						

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X	Gene, vol. 34, issued 1985, Wells et al "Cassette Mutagenesis: An efficient	1-8				
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j	"Oligonucleotide-directed Mutagenesis Using MI-derived Vectors: an efficient					
	and General Procedure for the Production					
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FURTHER INFORMATION CONTINUED FROM THE SECOND SHEET
V. OBSERVATIONS WHERE CERTAIN CLAIMS WERE FOUND UNSEARCHABLE
This international search report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2) (a) for the following reasons: 1. Claim numbers because they relate to subject matter 1 not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:
••
2. Claim numbers, because they relate to parts of the international application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful international search can be carried out 1, specifically:
Claim numbers, because they are dependent claims not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of PCT Rule 6.4(a).
VI. X OBSERVATIONS WHERE UNITY OF INVENTION IS LACKING ²
This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application as follows: Group I, claims 1-8 to IL-2 muteins, classified 530/351; Group II, claims 9-13, to DNA, vectors, cells and method of making IL-2 mutein, classified 435/69.52 and 172.3; Group III, claims 14-15 to IL-2-toxin conjugates, classified 530/402.
1. As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers all searchable claims of the international application.
2. As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers only those claims of the international application for which fees were paid, specifically claims:
3. No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this international search report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claim numbers:
1-8 TELEPHONE PRACTICE
4. As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, the International Searching Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.
Remark on Protest The additional search fees were accompanied by applicant's protest.
No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

Form PCT/ISA/210 (supplemental sheet (2) (Rev. 4-90)